

ARTICULATING SUMMATIVE AND FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Leonor Santos, Jorge Pinto

Institute of Education of Lisbon University, Polytechnic Institute of Setúbal

In education, the teacher has to develop summative and formative assessment practices. Institutionally, summative assessment is imposed. Curricularly, the development of a systematic formative assessment is recommended. This guideline is confirmed by a recent OCDE report concerning Portugal (Santiago, Donaldson, Looney & Nusche, 2012). However, the use of this complex relationship (Bennett, 2011) creates tensions in teachers, leading them to devalue formative assessment. Although there are some attempts to deal with it (e.g. Harlen, 2006), this problem is far from being solved. Thus, in the context of a collaborative work, two mathematics teachers and two researchers have been developing an articulated assessment practice that begins with a summative moment, undergoes a formative assessment and ends with a summative one. In other words, students develop a set of tasks after a summative test, similar to it, performed outside the class. In this stage, students are encouraged to seek help when they need it. Each student has only to answer to the questions corresponding to those that do not quite hit the test. Depending on student performance, the mark of the first test can be changed. This study intends to understand if this articulated assessment practice permits the development of an effective formative assessment.

Following an interpretive methodological approach, this study uses quantitative and qualitative data. 168 students (37 of grade 7 and 131 of grade 8) of 7 classes participated. The data is collected through documental evidence, comparing the evolution of each student achievement from the first test to the set of tasks, a questionnaire to all students and semi-structured interviews to nine students, in order to understand which is the students' perception of this articulated assessment practice, the main reasons for their involvement and the sources they used for helping them.

The first results evidence that only 63% of the students accomplished these tasks. For this group of students, a large majority considers that this practices helps them to learn, what is confirmed by a positive progress from the test to the set of tasks. From the different resources used, their own school notebook is detached. Although these first results have positive aspects, a special attention has to be given to the students that are not involved in this strategy.

References

Bennett, R. (2011). Formative assessment: a critical review. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 18(1), 5-25.

- Harlen, W. (2006). On the relationship between assessment for formative and summative purposes. In J. Gardner (Ed.), *Assessment and learning* (pp. 61-80). London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Santiago, P.; Donaldson, G.; Looney, A. & Nusche, D. (2012). *OECD Reviews of evaluation and assessment in education: Portugal*. OECD (<http://www.oecd.org/edu/evaluationpolicy>)
-